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ABSTRACT

Presented in the belief that it is time for parents and teachers of primary school children to add a primary perspective to the national conversation about education, this booklet provides an up-to-date introduction to the work of primary schools across Australia. It also offers parents ideas they can use to support their children's learning at home and to participate in the life of their children's school. Starting with a discussion of the nature of schooling, the booklet summarizes parents' expectations, shared beliefs about children, shared beliefs about learning, shared values, aims of the primary school, and the way primary teachers work. The booklet is based upon current changes in primary school curriculum which are meant to reduce state differences. The booklet then presents elements from each key learning area--English, mathematics, science, technology, studies of society and the environment, the arts, health and physical education, and languages other than English (LOTE)--with suggestions for providing support at home. Student assessment is defined, and methods for reporting to parents on child performance are noted. Included is a list of seven essential elements in programs with high parent participation, including two-way communication and administrative support. A general list of ways parents can help in schools is presented. The booklet concludes with points for discussion within school communities. (WP)

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